

**Commissioner Deborah A. Gist's Weekly Field Memo**  
**Friday, August 3, 2012**

**Notes to the Field:**

1. [Commissioner Gist](#)'s condition updated
2. RIDE expresses concern about [potential cuts in federal aid](#) to education

**From the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE):**

3. RIDE schedules [NECAP test-coordinator](#) workshops
4. Seats still available for [formative-assessment professional-development sessions](#)
5. [PARCC](#) seeks public feedback on draft policies on college-ready determination, performance-level descriptors
6. [IMS training guides](#) available for download, distribution
7. RIDE schedules administrators' meeting on Rhode Island [Alternate Assessment](#)
8. RIDE to provide updates, training on Rhode Island [Interim Assessments](#)
9. [School-reconfiguration updates](#) must be submitted to RIDE
10. RIDE shares reflection questions to help school, district leaders review [final evaluation ratings](#)
11. Video featuring Rhode Island educators discussing the [Rhode Island Model](#) accessible online
12. RIDE to offer grants for developing, piloting [performance-based compensation](#) systems
13. RIDE asks LEAs to complete [IMS Roles Form](#) prior to September 10 launch of the IMS – **Action Item**
14. Applicants notified of six- to eight-week [processing time for certifications](#)
15. RIDE announces [All-Inclusive Device Solution](#) Master Price Agreement for technology

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**Action Item Calendar**

**Today** (August 3): Deadline for naming [EPSS District Configuration Administrators](#)  
**Today** (August 3): Deadline to provide contact information for [District SSO Administrators](#)  
August 17: [Personnel Assignment](#) Process file update due

***Notes to the Field:***

**1. Commissioner Gist's condition updated**

As you may have heard, Commissioner Gist suffered a severe concussion recently while traveling to a conference in Atlanta. On doctor's orders, Commissioner Gist has been recuperating at home since her injury. The RIDE staff is in regular contact with the Commissioner, and the staff will continue to manage the daily operations of RIDE while the Commissioner is out of the office. We all wish Commissioner Gist a rapid recovery from her injury.

**2. RIDE expresses concern about potential cuts in federal aid to education**

To express our concern about the potential sequestration of federal funds, which would reduce federal aid to education for the school year beginning September 2013, on behalf of Commissioner Gist, Deputy Commissioner Abbott has sent the following letter to the members of the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of educators, parents, and students across Rhode Island, I want to express to you my deep concern about the across-the-board cuts to the federal budget that could go into effect if Congress cannot work with President Obama to implement a plan to reduce the federal deficit through targeted cuts. These potential cuts to nondiscretionary federal funding, known as "sequestration," would have a serious impact on public education in Rhode Island. The cuts would affect the level and quality of services we provide to children and would lead to many layoffs among Rhode Island teachers, aides, and other school employees. The cuts would have a particularly severe effect on our economically disadvantaged students and on our lowest-achieving schools, as most of the federal education aid is directed toward our highest-poverty communities.

As Education Secretary Arne Duncan noted last month (July 25) in his testimony before the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, these budget cuts would force schools to lay off teachers and to eliminate services for students while indiscriminately reducing programs that serve Americans of all ages.

In fact, Senator Harkin, who chairs that Subcommittee, has issued a [report](#), "Under Threat: Sequestration's Impact on Nondefense Jobs and Services," that presents details about the effect these across-the-board cuts would have on public education. In Rhode Island, sequestration would lead to:

- a \$3.6-million cut in Title I grants: 50 education jobs lost and 4,448 fewer students served;

- a \$440,000 cut in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Communities: 1,160 fewer students served;
- a cut of nearly \$3.3 million in Special Education Grants: nearly 40 jobs no longer supported by federal funds;
- a cut of nearly \$170,000 in Special Education Grants for Infants and Families: 145 fewer infants and children served;
- a cut of \$190,000 in English Language Acquisition grants: 515 fewer students served;
- a cut of more than \$400,000 in state grants for Career and Technical Education: 2,006 fewer students receiving the education and skills they need for high-demand jobs;
- a cut of nearly \$130,000 in School Improvement Grants, diminishing our capacity to transform the lowest-achieving schools; and
- a cut of more than \$900,000 to the Improving Teacher Quality Grants, curtailing professional development for nearly 1,000 teachers.

As you can see, these potential cuts in federal aid to our schools would be harmful to our students, would put an additional strain on local budgets as communities try to make up for some of the shortfall, and could add to the already dire unemployment level in our state.

I sincerely hope that you will be able to work together with your colleagues in Congress to develop a budget that will provide a long-term solution to our federal budget shortfalls while maintaining our longstanding commitment to supporting our teachers and to preparing our students for success in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century economy. If there is anything I can do or any information that I can provide to you to help in this effort, please do not hesitate to call on me.

***From RIDE:***

### **3. RIDE schedules NECAP test-coordinator workshops**

Please see the following message from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

Next month, RIDE will offer three face-to-face workshops for district- and school-level test coordinators. The workshops will provide the important details associated with the coordination and administration of the October 2012 NECAP tests for grades 3 through 8 and 11. These workshops will also provide attendees with updates on test-security policies and procedures as well as with opportunities to ask questions. Dates, times, locations, and registration instructions for the test-administration workshops are included below. Please sign up for only one workshop:

September 17, from 1 – 3 p.m., Providence Marriott Downtown, 1 Orms St.  
 September 18, from 9 – 11 a.m., Radisson Airport Hotel, 2081 Post Rd., Warwick  
 September 18, from 1 – 3 p.m., Radisson Airport Hotel, Warwick

To register for a workshop, go to:

<http://iregister.measuredprogress.org/SessionList.aspx>

You may also register in person on the day of each workshop 30 minutes before the scheduled start time.

For those unable to attend one of the face-to-face workshops, we will schedule an interactive WebEx online workshop at a later date, and we will also post the WebEx on the RIDE website for later viewing. An announcement will be made in the Field Memo once details are finalized.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Kevon Tucker-Seeley ([kevon.tucker-seeley@ride.ri.gov](mailto:kevon.tucker-seeley@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8494).

#### **4. Seats still available for formative-assessment professional-development sessions**

Please see this notice from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

Reminder: If you are launching the formative-assessment professional development this fall and want to send facilitators to an orientation session, please register through eRide as soon as possible. Seats are still available in the following sessions:

- Friday, August 10, from 1:30 – 5 p.m., at the New England Institute of Technology, 1 New England Tech Blvd., East Greenwich
- Monday, August 13, from 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., at Lincoln Senior High School, 135 Old River Rd.
- Monday, August 13, from 1:30 - 5 p.m., at Lincoln Senior High School
- Monday, August 20, from 1:30 – 5 p.m., at Middletown, Administration Building, 26 Oliphant Lane

Facilitators need only attend one half-day session. If you have any questions about the orientation sessions or the formative assessment professional development, please contact Laura Kacewicz, at [laura.kacewicz@ride.ri.gov](mailto:laura.kacewicz@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8993.

#### **5. PARCC seeks public feedback on draft policies on college-ready determination, performance-level descriptors**

Please see the following notice from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is seeking feedback from the public on two draft policies related to its next-generation assessment system:

*Draft Policy on PARCC College-Ready Determination in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics*

The draft policy on PARCC college-ready determinations in English language arts (ELA)/literacy and mathematics describes the academic knowledge, skills, and

practices in English and mathematics students must demonstrate to show they are able to enter directly into and succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing courses in those content areas at two- and four-year institutions of higher education.

*Draft Policy-Level and General Content-Level Performance Level Descriptors (PLDs)*

The draft policy-level and general content-level PLDs describe the educational consequences that PARCC states would ascribe to students who attain a particular performance level on the PARCC assessments. The draft also describes, in broad terms, the knowledge, skills, and practices students performing at a given performance level are able to demonstrate at any grade level.

PARCC is seeking feedback from members of the public on both draft policies through **September 21**. Based on feedback from members of the public, PARCC states will review and revise these draft policies as necessary before formally adopting them in the fall. You can review the draft policy and provide comments via an online survey, at <http://bit.ly/PARCCCRDPLD-R11>, through September 21.

The draft policies can be found at:

[www.parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/PARCCDraftCRDPolicyandPolicyandGeneralContentClaimsforPLDs7\\_12\\_12.pdf](http://www.parcconline.org/sites/parcc/files/PARCCDraftCRDPolicyandPolicyandGeneralContentClaimsforPLDs7_12_12.pdf).

Please feel free to share this notice with your community.

## **6. IMS training guides available for download, distribution**

Please see this message from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

To help LEAs prepare for the launch of the Instructional Management System (IMS), the training guides listed below are now available to download. The IMS Deployment Guide is also available on the same web page. It will help LEAs work through the complexities of developing a plan for the successful deployment of the IMS, including training and supporting staff and configuration of the system.

Most LEAs sent staff to IMS trainings over the summer. The guides used during those trainings have been updated to reflect current policies, decisions, and processes. Please download and read the guides below for the most current information. The guides can be reproduced as a whole or in parts and provided to teachers as necessary. It is helpful to have teachers and trainers review the guides before training.

These are the updated guides:

- IMS Administration Guides for IMS and Exceed Rtl;
- Teacher Guide for curriculum and Quick Cards for Exceed Rtl; and
- IMS Deployment Guide to help districts plan and prepare for rolling out the IMS.

The guides are available here:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/IMS.aspx>

For more information about the IMS, please contact Bob Measel ([Robert.Measel@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Robert.Measel@ride.ri.gov)) or Heather Heineke ([Heather.Heineke@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Heather.Heineke@ride.ri.gov)).

## **7. RIDE schedules administrators' meeting on Rhode Island Alternate Assessment**

Please see this notice from our Office of Student, Community, and Academic Supports:

Principals, administrators of private special-education schools, and Special Education Directors are invited to the annual Rhode Island Alternate Assessment (RIAA) Administrators Meeting, which will be held at the Knight Campus of CCRI, 400 East Avenue, Warwick, on August 22, from 1 – 3 p.m.. The meeting will provide administrators of special education, principals, and other administrators with necessary information to support and supervise administration of the RIAA.

Seating is limited, so please register by **August 17**. For questions or more information about the Alternate Assessment or this meeting, please contact Heather Heineke, at [heather.heineke@ride.ri.gov](mailto:heather.heineke@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8497, or Becky Wright, at [becky.wright@ride.ri.gov](mailto:becky.wright@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8404.

To register, go to:

<http://www.eride.ri.gov/workshopReg/ViewWorkshop.aspx?workshopid=536>

## **8. RIDE to provide updates, training on Rhode Island Interim Assessments**

Please see this announcement from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

RIDE is requesting that all LEAs implementing the Interim Assessments this year review the Interim Assessments Updates document found [here](#). This document includes important updates about both the fixed-form assessments, such as testing-window dates, scoring of constructed-response items, and mailing paper versions of tests back to the test vendor, as well as updates on the test-construction tool. It also includes guiding questions for LEAs and schools to consider as they plan for implementation, including who should be trained on the system, which is a decision that needs to be made soon in preparation for the September training discussed below. In addition, the document includes a month-by-month timeline for implementation.

Software for the student computers will be available next week for installation. Information regarding this software will be made available [here](#) and in next week's Field Memo. This software is required to be on student computers prior to the test administration in November, but should be installed in October at the latest so that students can practice using the online testing system.

Two training opportunities for school and LEA leadership are available for the Interim Assessments, although participants will need to attend only one session.

Dates and locations:

September 20

Registration begins at 8 a.m., training from 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Crowne Plaza, 801 Greenwich Avenue, Warwick 02886

Register on eRIDE, at:

<http://www.eride.ri.gov/WorkshopReg/viewWorkshop.aspx?workshopid=537>

September 26

Registration begins at 12:30 p.m., training from 1 – 4 p.m.

Crowne Plaza in Warwick, 801 Greenwich Avenue Warwick 02886

Register on eRIDE, at:

<http://www.eride.ri.gov/WorkshopReg/viewWorkshop.aspx?workshopid=538>

Note: Training is open to identified district and school personnel who have been selected by leadership. Those not sure if they have been identified as an Interim Assessment trainer should check with your principal or central office.

If you have any questions about the Interim Assessments or the training, please contact Jessica Brown, at [Jessica.Brown@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Jessica.Brown@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8253.

#### **9. School-reconfiguration updates must be submitted to RIDE**

Please see this notice from our Office of Data, Analysis, and Research:

This is a reminder to notify RIDE as soon as possible about changes to the configuration of schools for the upcoming school year. Possible changes include closing, merging, splitting, renaming, changing the grade configuration, or changing the physical address of any school, as well as assigning a new principal to the school. Notification is needed so that changes can be reviewed by the Data Governance Board for assignment of appropriate school codes, implications for school classifications, etc. This information also needs to be captured in the school directory, InfoWorks, and other public applications so that they are up to date when school begins.

The notification form is available on the RIDE website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/dataworks/documents/SchoolConfigurationUpdateForm.xls>.

Once completed, it should be e-mailed to Mike Ferry, at [Michael.Ferry@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Michael.Ferry@ride.ri.gov).  
Thank you for your attention to this matter.

#### **10. RIDE shares reflection questions to help school, district leaders review final evaluation ratings**

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

The 2011-12 Final Effectiveness Ratings for teachers and building administrators represent countless hours of hard work and a shared commitment to ensuring that we have great teachers in every classroom and great leaders in every school. The 2011-12 Final Effectiveness Ratings also represent an important opportunity for critical reflection at both the state and local level.

To help school and district leaders review their 2011-12 Final Effectiveness Ratings, RIDE has developed a one-page document that includes a series of reflection questions. To access the reflection-questions document, please visit the RIDE website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/EdEvalAnnounce.aspx>

This link is scheduled to go live today (August 3).

**11. Video featuring Rhode Island educators discussing the Rhode Island Model accessible online**

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

A new video that features Rhode Island educators discussing the value of the Rhode Island Model is now accessible online. The video is part of the homepage for the Framework for Teaching Effectiveness Series and the Framework for Teaching Proficiency System - the online training and support systems for teachers and evaluators.

We are extremely thankful to all of the Rhode Island educators who volunteered their time to help develop the video. To access this exciting new resource, please go to:

<http://www.teachscape.com/html/ts/nps/ride/>

**12. RIDE to offer grants for developing, piloting performance-based compensation systems**

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

We are looking for LEAs, multi-LEA collaboratives, or LEA-union partnerships to work with us in developing a deeper understanding of the research and in developing and piloting new compensation systems for teachers and leaders that can serve as models for LEAs throughout the state. These models can incorporate career pathways and other elements into larger human-capital structures. RIDE will award two multi-year grants of \$250,000 through a competitive-grant process. If you are interested in learning more about this important work, please mark your calendars and plan to bring a team to the information session at West Bay Collaborative, 144 Bignall St., Warwick 02888, on **August 15**. The session will run from 9 – 11 a.m.

We have added several documents and links on performance-based compensation to update the RIDE website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/CompReform.aspx>.

**13. RIDE asks LEAs to complete IMS Roles Form prior to September 10 launch of the IMS – Action Item**

Please see this notice from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

The Instructional Management System (IMS) will launch on **September 10**. If personnel from your LEA have attended IMS trainings and your LEA intends to launch any component of the IMS this fall, the IMS Roles Form must be completed prior to the launch. The information requested in this form is critical for RIDE in order to provide the necessary support to ensure a successful deployment in your LEA. The form can be completed and submitted to RIDE electronically from the following link:

[http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/DOCS/IMS/District\\_IMS\\_Roles\\_Form.pdf](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/DOCS/IMS/District_IMS_Roles_Form.pdf)

*Important note:* The IMS Roles Form can be completed only after reviewing or completing the IMS Deployment Guide, which explains the responsibilities associated with the various roles in the IMS. That document can be accessed at:

[http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/DOCS/IMS/IMS\\_Deployment\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Division-EEIE/DOCS/IMS/IMS_Deployment_Guide.pdf).

If you have questions, please e-mail Bob Measel ([robert.measel@ride.ri.gov](mailto:robert.measel@ride.ri.gov)) or Heather Heineke ([heather.heineke@ride.ri.gov](mailto:heather.heineke@ride.ri.gov)).

**14. Applicants notified of six- to eight-week processing time for certifications**

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

The following notice has been added to the Educator Quality and Certification Office page on the RIDE website, informing applicants that there is a six- to eight-week certification-application processing time during the summer months. Please share this information with your educators:

Due to the high volume of mail in the summer months, it takes approximately 6 – 8 weeks from the time we receive a certification application until it is processed and entered into the RICERT system. The certification office will contact you when your application has been processed. Confirmation that your packet has been received will be sent once your request has been processed in the RICERT system. At that time, if any additional information is needed, notification will also be provided.

We appreciate your patience as we work to process and issue certifications as quickly as possible.

**15. RIDE announces All-Inclusive Device Solution Master Price Agreement for technology**

Please see this notice from our Office of Multiple Pathways:

As part of our comprehensive plan to bring about meaningful change in education, we have been working hard to make available an all-inclusive solution for districts and schools interested increasing student access to technology. There is little question that technology applications and tools show great promise to improve student outcomes, but technology alone is not enough. Achieving the true potential of digital learning requires great teachers, motivated students, interested parents and guardians, smart policies, and equal opportunities for access to technology for all students.

The solution available through the All-Inclusive Device Solution Master Price Agreement includes three main components:

- the device, a Lenovo X131e ThinkPad with a full suite of software, Netbook Case, and stereo headphones;
- full insurance and maintenance for the two-year period including help-desk technical support; and
- extensive professional-development opportunities for educators.

The pre-negotiated contract pricing provides either a fair market value or a dollar buy-out two-year leasing option designed to meet LEA needs.

Thank you to the many people working diligently on the implementation of this project. The selected vendor, CDW-G, has provided a comprehensive solution and submitted all of the necessary paperwork to the Department of Administration, which will be creating the PO shortly. Our Legal Office has been working carefully to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood in a memorandum of understanding. LEA representatives have attended meetings and are contributing to contents of the state “golden image” that will be loaded on the devices. Many of the principals across the state have taken the opportunity learn more about the solution by speaking with representatives from CDW-G while attending the RIASP Summer Conference this week. Several have scheduled local meetings with CDW-G to increase awareness and understanding.

More information is available and will be updated regularly on the RIDE website, at:

[http://www.ride.ri.gov/OMP/VL/TechOps/All\\_Inclusive/All\\_Inclusive.aspx](http://www.ride.ri.gov/OMP/VL/TechOps/All_Inclusive/All_Inclusive.aspx)

LEAs interested in opting in to the All-Inclusive Device Solution should contact Holly Walsh, in our Office of Multiple Pathways, for more information, at [holly.walsh@ride.ri.gov](mailto:holly.walsh@ride.ri.gov).

***RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:***

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Commissioner/fieldmemos/default.aspx>